

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-15, and claims 17-20 without prejudice.

Please rewrite claim 16 as set forth below in clean form. Additionally, in accordance with 37 CFR 1.121(c)(1)(ii), the amended claim is set forth in a marked-up version in the pages attached to this Amendment.

- 5/21 > 16. (Once Amended) A method for automatically gathering and analyzing data without human intervention relating to an asset comprising the steps of:
- (a) generating a maintenance invoice when service is performed on the asset, wherein the maintenance invoice includes an indication of the amount of usage of the asset;
- (b) transmitting the maintenance invoice to an administrative controller;
- (c) comparing the indication of the amount of usage of the asset with a predetermined standard that is representative of the warranty period; and
- (d) generating a warranty report if the amount of usage is less than the predetermined standard.

Please add the following new claims:

- 5/22 > 21. (NEW) A system for gathering and analyzing data relative to an asset comprising:
- a data acquisition device for sensing at least one operating characteristic of the asset and for generating acquired data that is representative thereof;
- a transmitter attached to the asset for transmitting said acquired data from said data acquisition device;
- a receiver for receiving said acquired data transmitted from said transmitter;
- a local controller associated with said receiver that is in at least periodic communication with said transmitter;
- an analysis controller located at a second location remote from said local controller that is responsive to said acquired data from a plurality of local controllers for generating an analysis of said acquired data from said plurality of said local controllers, said analysis

~~controller being configured for automatically determining without human intervention whether maintenance of the asset has been provided; and~~

~~an electronic communications network connected between each of said local controllers and said analysis controller and permitting transmission of said acquired data from said local controller to said analysis controller.~~

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~~22.~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ~~21~~², wherein said transmitter includes a wireless communications system for transmitting said acquired data from said data acquisition device through space to said receiver.

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~~23.~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ~~21~~², further including an administrative controller separate from said analysis controller, wherein said analysis controller transmits said analysis of said data to said administrative controller.

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~~24.~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ~~23~~⁴, wherein there are a plurality of administrative controllers.

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~~25.~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ~~23~~⁴, wherein said analysis controller is configured to generate management reports relating to the procurement and utilization of the asset.

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~~26.~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ~~25~~⁶, wherein said analysis controller is configured to post said reports to a website maintained on the internet.

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~~27.~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ~~21~~², wherein there is a warranty associated with the asset and there are a plurality of responsible parties associated with said system, said analysis controller configured to use at least a portion of said acquired data in automatically determining which of said responsible parties has responsibility in whole or in part for maintenance performed on the asset based on said warranty.

28. (NEW) The system defined in claim 27, wherein a first responsible party comprises at least one of a manufacturer and a supplier of the asset and a second responsible party comprises at least one of an owner or user of the asset.

29. (NEW) The system defined in claim 27, wherein said analysis controller includes a record of the asset, said record including said responsible parties and the nature of said responsibility, the nature of said responsibility including a factor based on said at least one operating characteristic of the asset

30. (NEW) The system defined in claim 29, wherein said factor comprises at least one of an amount of asset usage and date of service.

31. (NEW) A system for gathering and analyzing data relative to an asset comprising:

a data acquisition device for sensing at least one operating characteristic of the asset and for generating acquired data that is representative thereof;

a transmitter attached to the asset for transmitting said acquired data from said data acquisition device;

a receiver for receiving said acquired data transmitted from said transmitter;

a local controller associated with said receiver that is in at least periodic communication with said transmitter;

an analysis controller located at a second location remote from said local controller that is responsive to said acquired data from a plurality of local controllers for generating an analysis of said acquired data from said plurality of said local controllers, said analysis controller being configured for automatically determining without human intervention whether maintenance of the asset has been provided;

an electronic communications network connected between each of said local controllers and said analysis controller and permitting transmission of said acquired data from said local controller to said analysis controller;

wherein there are a plurality of responsible parties associated with said system, a first responsible party comprising at least one of a manufacturer and a supplier of the asset and a second responsible party comprising at least one of an owner or user of the asset, said

analysis controller configured to use at least a portion of said acquired data in automatically determining which of said responsible parties has responsibility in whole or in part for maintenance performed on the asset;

said analysis controller including a record of the asset, said record including said responsible parties and the nature of said responsibility, the nature of said responsibility including a factor based on said at least one operating characteristic of the asset.

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~~32~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ¹¹²~~31~~, wherein there is a warranty associated with the asset, and the nature of said responsibility is based on said warranty.

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~~33~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ¹¹²~~31~~, wherein said at least one operating characteristic of the asset comprises an amount of asset usage, said amount of asset usage being used to automatically determine which of said responsible parties has said responsibility.

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~~34~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ¹¹²~~31~~, wherein said at least one operating characteristic of the asset comprises a date of service, said date of service being used to automatically determine which of said responsible parties has said responsibility.

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~~35~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ¹¹²~~31~~, further including an administrative controller separate from said analysis controller, wherein said analysis controller transmits said analysis of said data to said administrative controller.

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~~36~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ¹¹⁶~~35~~, wherein there are a plurality of administrative controllers, said analysis controller configured to generate management reports relating to the procurement and utilization of the asset.

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~~37~~ (NEW) The system defined in claim ¹¹⁷~~36~~, wherein said analysis controller is configured to post said reports to a website maintained on the internet.

38. (NEW) A system for gathering and analyzing data relating to an asset comprising:

a local controller located at a first location for acquiring data that is representative of at least one operating characteristic of the asset;

an analysis controller that is responsive to said acquired data from a plurality of local controllers for generating an analysis of said acquired data, said analysis controller being configured to determine whether maintenance of the asset has been provided;

an electronic communications network connected between said local controller and said analysis controller and permitting transmission of said acquired data from said local controller to said analysis controller;

wherein there are a plurality of responsible parties associated with said system, said analysis controller configured to use at least a portion of said acquired data in automatically determining which of said responsible parties has responsibility in whole or in part for maintenance performed on the asset; and

said analysis controller including a record of the asset, said record including said responsible parties and the nature of said responsibility, the nature of said responsibility including a factor based on said at least one operating characteristic of the asset.

39. (NEW) The system defined in claim 38, wherein there is a warranty associated with the asset, and the nature of said responsibility is based on said warranty.

40. (NEW) The system defined in claim 39, wherein said at least one operating characteristic of the asset comprises at least one of an amount of asset usage and a date of service.

41. (NEW) The system as defined in claim 40, said record including past acquired data, said current acquired data automatically compared with said past acquired data without human intervention using predetermined criteria to determine whether maintenance of the asset is required.